



Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

Celebrating 30 Years of Leadership & Advocacy



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MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, November 16, 2005, at Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Room 140, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles.

CALL TO ORDER

In the absence of Chair Neal, the meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. by Vice Chair Rubenstein. Introductions of Commissioners, Staff and audience members followed.

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 17 AND SEPTEMBER 21, 2005 MEETING MINUTES

This agenda item was postponed pending a quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Block – Offered comments about potential changes to the Medical and Medicaid programs which will affect the delivery of services to program participants.

Ray Nasser – Informed the Commission about an incident in which he was attacked by citizens in Santa Monica, as well as beaten and arrested by Santa Monica police officers. Following discussion, Commissioners advised Mr. Nasser and offered referrals to agencies specializing in assisting people with disabilities with legal and civil rights matters. Commissioners also agreed to forward Mr. Nasser's letter to the Mayor of the City of Santa Monica.

Vice Chair Rubenstein – Discussed his ongoing efforts to advocate on behalf of people with disabilities, promote the activities of the Commission and his desire to coordinate and work in conjunction with other disability organizations on issues of mutual concern.

PRESENTATION ON CHUCKER GOLF CLUB

Mr. Grant Gerson gave a presentation and demonstration on the use of the Chucker Golf Club. The Chucker Golf Club was invented by Mr. Gerson's Son-in-Law after his father who was an avid golfer became disabled and was no longer able to play golf. With the Chucker Golf Club a person confined to a wheelchair can play golf by swinging overhand to catapult the ball onto the golf course. A special scoring system has been created so that Chucker users can score and play along with able-bodied golfing partners.

Mr. Gerson also spoke about other efforts to promote the Chucker Club such as fund raising strategies, public awareness and the golf tournament next year to raise money for the "Make a Wish" foundation. He is also promoting the purchase of "solo carts" (a cart with a swivel seat that can be used by wheelchair users or amputees) to golf courses. Chucker golf clubs cost \$29.95 retail and \$14.95 for non-profit organizations and can be purchased at www.chuckergolf.com.

STAFF REPORT

Update on CD Website

Jim Corbett reported that the development of the Commission's webpage is progressing and a staff person has been assigned to work with Internal Services to build and customize the site. Funds have also been allocated to develop the webpage from the Chief Information Officer's information technology fund. In addition to information about the Commission, the website will also have a variety of links to disability organizations, services, and feature information about the Tainter Scholarship and Access Awards Luncheon. The website will also be interactive allowing the public to add information to the site which will have a master calendar for listing community events.

The site should be ready by the beginning of next year.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Mr. Burt Wallrich, Emergency Network Builders, County Office of Emergency Management gave an overview on the emergency preparedness guide his organization has prepared to address the needs of people with disabilities in an emergency situation.

Mr. Wallrich advised that the basic premise of the guide is to empower and encourage people with disabilities to prepare themselves and take responsibility for ensuring their own personal safety in an emergency.

Some of the guideline's highlights advise the following:

- Take on small tasks step by step to achieve preparedness goals.
- Build a support team of people who will help you in an emergency.
- Your support team should be people who are regularly in the same area as you. The real first responders in an emergency are often your neighbors, friends and co-workers.
- Do not rely on one person for assistance in an emergency. Your buddy or personal attendant may not be able to contact you quickly in an emergency.
- Practice your plan of action.
- Prepare different kits for different places and situations such as a "bedside kit" which has items you may need if you are trapped in or near your bed and unable to get to other parts of your home.
- Make sure you have some cash and medications you can't go without.
- Have a home kit, a grab and go kit, and a mini kit with emergency supplies.

Following a question and answer period, Commissioners and audience members offered their input on emergency issues that Mr. Wallrich should address or consider before the guidelines are finalized. The final guidelines will be offered in all types of alternative formats which include downloadable online, in Braille, on disk and tape as well as translated into Spanish. Mr. Wallrich will report back to the Commission when the guidelines are complete for distribution.

PUBLIC COMMENT (cont.)

Kurt Hagen from the Office of Affirmative Action gave the following report:

- During the last fiscal year his department has completed ADA and program access audits for six County Departments.
- Compliance reviews have been conducted on Public Social Services, Mental Health, Harbor UCLA and Olive View Medical Center.
- His department is also compiling information on barrier removal projects for the ADA Extraordinary Maintenance Fund. This fund

was established to provide money to County departments for barrier removal or repair.

- Training for County departments on ADA awareness and practices is ongoing. Eight trainings have been provided this year and 10 other departments are targeted to receive training next year.
- During the first quarter of 2005, 300 technical assistance requests from County departments were handled.
- County departments also received assistance with employment issues, reasonable accommodation, emergency evacuation, access assistance, guidance on parking enforcement, accessible parking and access code requirements.

Jim Corbett commented that he is currently working with the building's emergency program and asked if the Office of Affirmative Action offered training for mobility assistants. Mr. Hagen stated that at this time, his office does not provide that type of training, but he will look into the matter and report back.

Mr. Corbett also commented about the working condition of the handicap elevator located on Grand Street. Mr. Hagen stated that he would check on the status of the elevator with building maintenance and report back.

(Chair Neal joined the meeting)

COMMITTEE REPORTS - (Carried over to a future agenda)

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE - (Carried over to a future agenda)

HEALTH COMMITTEE - (Carried over to a future agenda)

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Neal reported and announced the following:

- She attended the Access Services Awards Luncheon earlier today and was able to network and promote the work of the Commission.
- Thanked the Commissioners who have gone out to community events to promote the Commission and its activities.
- Reported on bad customer service she recently received in relation to ADA compliance at a U.S. Post Office and a banking institution. Chair Neal stated that she reported both agencies to the proper

authorities for investigation. John Whitbread added that the Federal Access Board is currently conducting a campaign to enforce ADA compliance at U. S. Post offices. Additional information is available at www.access-board.gov.

- Held a meeting with City Parking Enforcement personnel to discuss handicap parking enforcement issues. Chair Neal will be inviting representatives to a future Commission meeting to address this problem.
- Announced that she would like the Commission to consider presenting a scroll to the Baldwin Hill Crenshaw Plaza in recognition of its accessibility efforts and the recent installation of electronic doors at the mall's entrances. Chair Neal suggested the scroll be presented by Supervisor Burke at an upcoming Board meeting next year.
- Chair Neal thanked everyone involved for their support and assistance in making the Access Awards Luncheon a success.
- Informed the Commission about an ARCO self-service gas station on Slauson and La Brea that will pump gas for people with disabilities until 9:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice Chair Rubenstein commented that copies of the brochure titled "Unhandicapping our Language", should be made available to the public to assist them when writing about or addressing people with disabilities.

Commissioner Krzyzanowski reported and announced the following:

- The Commission's brochure has been updated and he has been lobbying Supervisor Molina to fill the position recently vacated by Commissioner Resendez.
- On his recent trip to Poland, he observed that although the country is not as advanced as America in accessibility and barrier removal, they are however, progressing and beginning to do some good work on behalf of people with disabilities.
- He attended the Mental Health Alternatives Conference in Phoenix, and also the California Association of Mental Health Patient's Rights Advocates Annual Conference and Training in Sacramento.

Ray McKeever announced that beginning in March of 2006, the organization SHHH (Self Help for Hard of Hearing) will be changing its

name to Hearing Loss Association of America. Mr. McKeever also announced that the Ahmanson Theater will for the first time have live captioning during a performance in December.

John Whitbread announced that LILA is launching a new updated version of its website, and the Westside Center for Independent Living has grant funding available for apartment owners with disabled tenants or individual tenants with disabilities, living on the Westside, to make accessibility improvements or modifications to the exteriors of the premises. The City of Los Angeles Housing Department, City of Bell and Pasadena also have the same program.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. in memory of the one year anniversary of the death of Jami Lynn Foster, the female firefighter who was killed in the line of duty.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Janet Neal, Chair
Harley Rubenstein, Vice Chair
Bud Siegel, Treasurer
Steve Jensen
Richard Krzyzanowski
Michael G. Gureckas
Richard Krzyzanowski
Kecia Weller

Excused Absent

Ruth Ann Acosta
Viola Vivian Corbett
Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr.
Carlton L. Russell
John B. Troost
Wendy Welt
Sheila D. Wright

Board of Supervisors

Jim Corbett
Dedie Ward
Audra Galang

County of Los Angeles

Kurt Hagen, AAOC
Burt Wallrich, Office of Emergency Management

Guests

Rone C. Ellis
Maria Villasenor
Garry Barnett
Ray McKeever
Ray Nasser
John Whitbread
Carlton Lindo
Donald Brandon
Valerie Chatman
Grant Gerson